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CRITICAL NOTES.

HABAKKUK 3:10, 11, 15.

THE third chapter of Habakkuk is full of problems for the textual critic. It is the purpose of this little paper to throw some light on vss. 10, 11, 15 by comparing them with Psalm 77:17-20. These two passages have more in common than seems to have been recognized.

Psalm 77 is made up of fragments welded together. In verse 17 there is a change of meter from trimeter couplets to trimeter triplets. That is, the prevailing measure of the first sixteen verses is a verse or line of six main words, or feet, divided into two parallel members of three main words each, as, vs. 16:

גאלה בזרוע עמך || בני יעקב יוסף.

But with the next verse begins a new section of four verses in which the meter requires verses, or lines, of *three* trimeter members each, of which the first two are normally parallel, while the third develops or extends the thought.

The third chapter of Habakkuk is not thus frankly composite, although it has suffered interpolations and dislocations. As a whole, and with these exceptions, it is of singular unity. It is a prayer offered to Yahveh in anticipation of great danger from a foreign foe. It begins with a petition for the divine theophany for protection. That theophany immediately follows. Yahveh comes from his sacred seat in the mountains of the south, driving his chariot of thunder through the clouds, wielding his shafts of lightnings, accompanied by his dire attendants, Pestilence and Fever, filling the river torrents and trampling the seas. The prophet is affrighted at the vision, and yet trusts the divine goodness. The meter is generally trimeter couplets, except where, as in vs. 13, b. 14, the measure is entirely lost by the insertion of an incompatible passage, probably from a marginal note. The tenth and eleventh verses, which are a part of the passage to be considered, carry on directly the description of the theophany, telling its effect on the waters; and then how the sun and moon disappeared from view, and how the lightnings were shot abroad. By a dislocation

of thought, and very likely of text, the description of the theophany is interrupted with vss. 12-14 to tell its purpose, which was to stamp down the heathen oppressors and save the faithful nation. This digression interrupts the parallel with Psalm 77; but the description of the theophany is resumed in vs. 15, and with it the parallel with Psalm 77. In comparing these verses of Habakkuk's prayer with the passage in the psalm we must keep in mind the contrast in the purpose of the writers. Psalm 77 is wholly reminiscent. It looks back to the deliverance of Israel from Egypt, and expects similar deliverance in the future; while the prophet makes not the slightest allusion to past deliverances, but simply describes the appearance of Yahveh in his chariot of storm, as he comes from Teman to overwhelm his foes.

The two passages which are substantially common to the prayer of Habakkuk and Psalm 77 may be put in parallel columns as follows, the words or parts of words common to both being printed in larger type.

Habakkuk 3:10, 11, 15.

10. ראוך יחילו הרים
זרם מים עבר

נתן תהום קולו
רים ידיהו נשא:

11. שמש

ירח עמד זבלה

לאור חציך יהלכו
לנגה ברק חניתיד:

15. דרכת בים סוסיד
חמר מים רבים:

Psalm 77:17-20.

17. ראוך מים אלהים

ראוך מים יחילו
אם ירגז תהומות:

18. זרמו מים עבות
קול נתנו שחקים
אם חציך יהלכו:

19. קול רעמד בגלגל
האירו ברקים חבל
רגזה ותדעש הארץ:

20. בים דרכך
ושביליך במים רבים
ועקבותיך לא נודעו:

The comparison hardly leaves it doubtful which form more nearly represents the original. The substantial unity of sustained thought in the Habakkuk chapter, as contrasted with the cento form of the psalm, gives the priority to the former. The congruous metrical arrangement in Habakkuk, compared with the insertion of this bit of trimeter in the psalm, points to the same conclusion. Yet more conclusive is the

literary construction of the verses, which are less natural and more padded out in the psalm. We have substantially the original form in the prophet, while the compiler of the psalm has introduced the passage from Habakkuk rewritten in a different meter, and applied to a different topic, looking backward to the deliverance from Egypt by the Red Sea, instead of forward to a future theophany and deliverance, yet preserving as far as possible the characteristic expressions. Where the two texts differ we cannot slavishly correct one by the other, but each may suggest where misreadings or omissions of copyists have taken place in the other.

In comparing the two we first observe that where the Habakkuk version has **הרים** the psalm has **מים**. Here the Habakkuk text is probably right. While either mountains or waters might properly be said to *writhe*, it is rather more appropriate that the mountains should be said to *see* Yahveh as he approaches; and the figure of shaking, trembling, or leaping is familiar as applied to mountains and hills rather than to waters. Besides there is good reason why the compiler of the psalm, who had in view the deliverance of Israel from Egypt by way of the Red Sea, should have changed **הרים** to **מים**, but the reverse would be a less likely change. In Psalm 97, in which there are phrases from these two passages, the mountains *melt* before the appearing of Yahveh, while it is to the earth, and not the waters, that the two verbs of our passage are applied, **ראתה ותחל הארץ**.

The second member of this couplet, **זרם מים עבר**, corresponds to **זרמו מים עבות**, of verse 18 of the psalm. Here we must give the preference to the psalm. The parallelism gives us first the mountains writhing and trembling as the storm reaches them, and then the clouds which gather about them pouring down streams of waters. The *passing over*, **עבר**, of the flood is not germane. The poet must show its intensity, not its cessation. We may then correct Habakkuk by adopting this member just as it stands in the psalm.

The first couplet of vs. 11 is mutilated, and there is no parallel passage in the psalm from which we may restore it. As it stands now it is a tetrameter instead of a trimeter, and has no parallel member. The full original form would probably have told how the sun retired to his chamber, or concealed himself, while the moon stood still in its (his, *masc.*) habitation. The personal suffix of **זבלה** is not feminine but masculine, as elsewhere in Habakkuk.

In the second member of vs. 11 the shorter term **חציץ** may well be retained against the **חצציר** of the psalm. But in the same line

יהלכו would seem preferable to הילכו. The meaning of the couplet is, "For light" (*i. e.*, in place of the light of the sun and moon which had retired during the storm), "thine arrows were going abroad; for brightness, the lightning of thy spear."

Verse 15 of Habakkuk cannot be corrected by the corresponding verse 20 of the psalm. In the latter the word אלהים has probably dropped out at the end of the first member, where it was used for padding out the passage by the somewhat mechanical versifier, just as in vs. 17. With this correction the parallelism is too good to be disturbed by accommodating it to the Habakkuk form. The noun דרכך is required by שבילך and עקבותיך; and yet בים דרכך אלהים was suggested by בים סוסך דרכת, two words being nearly the same in both, while the parallel members have מים רבים in common. Instead of the noun חמר a verb form is required, חמרר or חמו.

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SUGGESTIONS CONCERNING THE ORIGINAL TEXT AND STRUCTURE OF AMOS 1:3—2:5.

ONE always approaches with hesitation the work of correcting the Old Testament text. But if we rightly consider the matter, we shall see that the hesitation is ungrounded. The evidence is overwhelming that the present text has suffered countless changes at the hands of careless scribes and interested editors. I am, at present, particularly interested in the help for the reconstruction of the text which is furnished by the strophic structure, and it is from this point of view that the following suggestions are offered. The problem is a most interesting one, and if the main proposition is true, the field opened is a wide one. I am not unmindful of what has already been done in this direction by students of Hebrew poetry.

The passage proposed for consideration is a unit, whether we regard it from the point of view of author or editor. Nowhere may we find better evidence of poetic skill than in the writings of Amos, whose work falls in the earliest period of written prophecy. An examination of these sections, seven in all, reveals clear indications, at the same time, of the artistic character of the original structure and of the violation of the same. For the sake of convenience of treatment, a convenience which grows out of the structure itself, I desire to present the sections in three groups, viz., (1) the sections concerning Damascus and